

Members

Rep. James Buck, Chairperson
Rep. Thomas Saunders
Rep. Jeb Bardon
Rep. Dan Stevenson
Sen. James Merritt
Sen. Brent Waltz
Sen. Richard Young
Sen. James Lewis



STATE HOUSE MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Legislative Services Agency
200 West Washington Street, Suite 301
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789
Tel: (317) 233-0696 Fax: (317) 232-2554

LSA Staff:

Chris Baker, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee
Irma Reinumagi, Attorney for the Committee

Authority: P. L. 117-2005

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: August 30, 2005
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St.,
Room 130
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Rep. James Buck, Chairperson; Rep. Thomas Saunders; Rep. Jeb Bardon; Rep. Dan Stevenson; Sen. James Lewis.

Members Absent: Sen. James Merritt; Sen. Brent Waltz; Sen. Richard Young.

Chairman Buck called the first meeting of the State House Museum Committee to order at 10:00 AM.

The Chairman opened the meeting with comments on the Committee's charge. He stated that the State House, over time, has changed often to meet the needs of the citizens of Indiana. He commented that the State House is the citizens'/taxpayers' building and that many people tour the State House every year.

Chairman Buck continued that the State House houses one of the oldest active state Supreme Courts in the United States. He stated he did not wish to see the beauty and architecture of the building detracted by the proposed museum.

The Chairman concluded his opening comments by stating that the Committee purpose is truly exploratory, and the purpose is not to displace any current tenants of the State House.

Following Chairman Buck's statement, Jennifer Hodge of the Department of Administration led the Committee on a tour of the State House first floor facilities. The tour concluded after

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approximately 45 minutes.

Upon return, Chairman Buck asked the Committee and persons in attendance, generally, if any of the toured space could be useable for the proposed museum. He further commented that the Committee needed to know which first floor walls are and are not bearing.

Chairman Buck commented with regard to a proposed Senate Avenue entrance to the museum, possible upgrade of the entrance facade, square footage considerations of the proposed museum, security considerations including possible screening of museum patrons, and a gift shop for patron mementoes.

The Chair then opened the floor to Committee members for comment.

Representative Bardon, member, stated that it is possible that space on the ground floor could be better utilized, however, he strongly recommended evaluation of all floors of the State House before deciding a final location for the museum.

Representative Saunders, member, responded that it is unlikely, given current budget considerations, that any agency would move out of the State House into a newly constructed facility for the foreseeable future.

Chairman Buck responded that the Committee could arrange to tour the remaining floors of the State House at the next meeting.

Chairman Buck recognized Representative Micon to speak. Representative Micon stated his concerns for funding of the museum and the possible displacement of first floor occupants. Chairman Buck responded that it was his understanding that mostly private funds would be available to create the museum and reiterated that the intent of the Committee is not to displace any occupants.

The Chairman next opened the floor for public testimony:

Burgess Brown, Legislative Director, Department of Natural Resources-

Ms. Brown testified that it would be possible for the Indiana State Museum Inc. (ISM) to provide personnel to staff the State House Museum as a satellite of the ISM. The ISM could also provide resources for the gift shop, similar to the arrangement that the ISM Foundation has with the White River gift shop.

Ms. Brown indicated that the plan would be to sell souvenir items at wholesale plus 20%, where the Foundation would provide the merchandise and personnel. All profits would go to the Foundation.

Dr. Sonne Palmer, Professor of Architecture, Ball State University-

Dr. Palmer testified that original drawings of the State House are available within the State Archives, and said that Ball State University had received copies of the drawings at an undetermined point in time. However, he did not know where those copies currently were.

Dr. Palmer stated that the State House was built over several periods of time and that drawings do not precisely reflect the State House as built. However, he offered that the first floor is close to the drawings.

Dr. Palmer touched on the prospect of student involvement in the design of the museum, with

prospective plans reflecting the Supreme Court housed in either the State House or in a separate building. He passed out two handouts (Exhibits A and B) to Committee members. Exhibit A was used to explain students' schedules for the semester. Exhibit B detailed a previous 1982 student study of State House space usage.

Dr. Palmer stated it would be advantageous to have student participation in the museum study. He continued that student plans could be displayed for public consideration and participation. He explained that the students would require a tour to draw some preliminary drawings, however, given the time constraints, the final product would provide a sketch only and should not be considered a detailed answer.

Following Dr. Palmer's testimony, the Committee discussed usage of all floors for the museum.

Jeff Linder, Ball State University-

Mr. Linder testified that he would like to see the legislature keep an open mind of usage of upstairs space in the event space becomes available down the road.

Jennifer Hodge, Department of Administration-

Ms. Hodge provided some background information on tours of the State House. She said approximately 50,000 persons tour the State House each year. She stated there was a need to find a better location to organize people for tours. When asked by the Chair what other states have done regarding a museum, Ms. Hodge answered that states range from having a fully functional museum and gift shop within their state houses to having no museum or shop of any kind. Indiana, she stated, is currently on the low side of the range. She stated the main issue in other states to create a museum boils down to available space.

Tracy Jones, Director of State House Tours, Department of Administration-

Ms. Jones testified that state statute provides that a museum could sell items within the State House as long as the proceeds go to the state General Fund or the Department of Administration.

Stephen Key, Hoosier State Press Association-

Mr. Key mentioned the importance of the press being in close proximity to the State House. He thought if a proposed museum were placed on the first floor then a possible "win-win" situation could occur for both the museum and the press. He said a museum on the first floor could possibly lead to an improvement of office quality, if the press were to move into offices above the first floor.

However, Mr. Key reiterated that their current proximity is much more important to the completion of their work. The current location of the press offices assists in meeting deadlines. He described an example that the TV media currently have the ability to more quickly edit tape they may have filmed on an upper floor than if they were in an office outside the State House that required travel.

With no further testimony offered, the Committee members discussed and agreed on taking a tour of the remaining State House floors during the next meeting.

The Committee set September 27, 2005, as the date for the second meeting and adjourned at 12:10 PM.